

**REMARKS**

Applicants thank the Examiner for consideration of this application.

**Claim amendments**

Currently, claims 1-6, 9-11, 25, 28-32 and 34-36 are pending. Claims 1, 25 and 28 are independent.

Applicants have amended independent claim 1 by clarifying that the step receives a request from a non-technically trained user of a visitor based network (VBN) to establish a group of users in the VBN, and the dissolving step dissolves the group based on predetermined rules including a predetermined rule to dissolve the group at expiry of a predetermined period. Support for the amendment can be found in the application as originally filed, e.g., page 8, lines 19-21, page 14, lines 11-13 and page 74, lines 10-22 of the specification.

Claims 25 and 28 have been amended in a similar manner.

Applicants have also added new claims 48 and 49 to recite that the request includes a usage period provided by the user and the group is dissolved when the usage period expires. Support for the amendment can be found in the application as originally filed, e.g., page 15, lines 23-26 and page 74, lines 10-22 of the specification.

It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been introduced into the application by these amendments. Entry of the amendments is respectfully requested.

**Rejections under 35 USC 103****Claims 1-6, 9-11 and 25**

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-6, 9-11 and 25 under 35 USC 103(a), alleging that these claims are unpatentable over Yuasa et al. (US Patent No. 6,085,238; hereinafter "Yuasa") in view of Iijima et al. (US Patent No. 6,223,218, hereinafter

"Iijima") in further view of Kawamoto et al. (US Publication No. 2005/0198136, hereinafter "Kawamoto").

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of these rejections for the reasons set out below based on the amended claims.

Claim 1

According to the invention as claimed in amended claim 1, the method of the present invention allows a group to be established in a VBN by a non-technically trained user of the VBN, joined by other users of the VBN, and dissolved based on a predetermined rule to dissolve the group at expiry of a predetermined period. The predetermined period may be a period of the registration lease of the user in the VBN as described on page 14, lines 11-13 or a usage period of the group set by the user as exemplified described on page 74, lines 10-22 and in new claims 48 and 49.

In contrast, none of Yuasa, Iijima or Kawamoto teach or suggest such a method.

Yuasa describes a VLAN "used for virtual network service providing a comfortable office environment making free use of IT, and integrated management of service is executed in units" (column 7, lines 4-7). Yuasa's VLAN is formed in an existing LAN. The user simply requests use of resources, and Yuasa's system automatically sets "a virtual network related to resource use of a different system" (column 10, lines 18-19; column 58, lines 43-45 and column 59 lines 14-16). Yuasa does not teach or suggest providing a group or VLAN in a VBN. Also, Yuasa does not teach dissolving the VLAN based on predetermined rules, as the Examiner has pointed out.

Iijima discloses deleting a port group composing the VLAN when the input information to the VLAN status variation device is "1" (column 4, lines 31-40), and the server 105 activates the VLAN status variation device and varies the VLAN status of the VLAN according to a rule when the VLAN alteration request sent from the switching hub is received (column 27, line 65 to column 28, line 7). However, Iijima does not teach dissolving the VLAN based on a predetermined rule to dissolve the

group at expiry of a predetermined period. Iijima does not teach or suggest establishing a VLAN in a VBN.

Kawamoto teaches that disengagement of a group is performed by the user A who is the former of the group, and that the network server receives a disengagement request only from the user A (paragraph 0109). Kawamoto does not teach or suggest dissolving a group at expiry of a predetermined period. In addition, users of Kawamoto's system are previously registered with a user ID and a password in the network server (paragraph 0040). Kawamoto does not teach or suggest establishing a group in a VBN.

None of Yuasa, Iijima and Kawamoto discloses or suggest establishing a group in a VBN by a VBN user and dissolving the group at expiry of a predetermined period. Accordingly, even if one skilled in the art attempts to combine these references, he would still fail to achieve the method as claimed in amended claim 1.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 1 is patentable over any combination of the cited references and complies with the requirements under 35 USC 103.

#### Claim 25

Amended claim 25 also recites the features of establishing a group in a VBN by a user of the VBN and dissolving the group at expiry of a predetermined period.

Accordingly, for the same reasons set out above, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 25 has been patentably distinguished over any combinations of the cited references.

#### Claims 2-6 and 9-11

These claims depend directly or indirectly on amended claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants trust that these claims are also patentable over the cited references.

Claims 28-32 and 34-36

The Examiner has rejected claims 28-32 and 34-36 under 35 USC 103(a), alleging that these claims are unpatentable over Yuasa in view of Kawamoto.

Claim 28

Amended claim 28 recites a server having a registration module to receive from a user of a VBN a request to create a group of users in the VBN, and a registration driver to register the user and other users of the VBN to access the group and dissolve the group based on a predetermined rule to dissolve the group at expiry of a predetermined period.

As discussed above, neither Yuasa nor Kawamoto teaches or suggest creation of a group in a VBN or dissolution of a group based on a predetermined rule to dissolve the group at expiry of a predetermined period.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 28 has been patentably distinguished over the cited references, and is allowable under 35 USC 103.

Claims 29-32 and 34-36

These claims depend directly or indirectly on amended claim 28, respectively. Accordingly, Applicants trust that these claims are also patentable over the cited references.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the claims currently on file have been patentably distinguished over Yuasa, Iijima and Kawamoto, and are patentable under 35 USC 103.

Having dealt with all rejections and completely responded to the Office Action, Applicants respectfully submit that the currently pending claims as amended are in condition for allowance. Early favorable reconsideration of the application is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

Ikuko Wada

Ikuko Wada  
Registration No. 43,432

Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP  
160 Elgin Street, Suite 2600  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada K1P 1C3  
(613) 233-1781

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